

THE C4 NEWSLETTER

Colonial Coin Collectors Club

NJ Horse Head Left Coppers



Fall, 1999

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The C4 Newsletter Volume 7 Number 3
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Ads for this newsletter can be purchased as follows:

	1 issue	2 issues	3 issues	Copy size
1 page	\$50	\$75	\$125	4-1/2"x 7-1/2"
½ page	30	45	75	4-1/2"x 3-3/4"

If you want to include a photo with your ad at an additional \$10. Black and white photo needed, size can be adjusted to fit. Please send check with your ad. We can accept camera ready copy or any Microsoft Word compatible computer file.

All members also have the right to include a free classified ad in the newsletter of up to 13 lines.



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Editor's Notes

Angel Pietri

After my comments on the last issue about the lack of commentary, I was surprised with the three interesting letters that appear in this issue. Please keep it up. This type of response is stimulating to all.

Phil Mossman and I traded some E-mail on the same subject. He informs me that his experience has been very similar with CNL. Although we speculated on the possible reasons, we are not really sure of why this apparent apathy.

Many of us have interesting coins, or coins that tell a story. If you have any such coins and wish to share with the rest of the members let me know. We can arrange to photograph the coin or coins, and we can help you with the write-up also. Also, members that may have any interesting questions about a certain issue can submit it, and we will try to get some opinions on the subject from other knowledgeable members.

Dues

This is the last call for dues for this year. If your mailing label has a 98, your dues are needed. If the number is 99 or 00, you are up to date on your dues.



Message from the President

by Dennis Wierzba

As many of our members know (copperclem, bigfrank, dp1787, machinsman, sscrosby, tcolonial, vendella, ticktoc, greenthumb007, etc.), colonial coppers are available on EBAY. The competition you see at coin shows now spills over to internet auctions. As a word of warning, many sellers DO NOT allow returns. Buy from dealers you know or ask for the right of return as a condition for bidding.

Speaking of auctions, I was very impressed by the Heritage ANA auction (live and Internet). You could bring up a high quality scan of each colonial for sale and bid on-line. This may be the auction/ fixed price model of the future.

The Vermont book is getting to be in short supply. Anyone who has corrections, new historical discoveries or great Vermonts should contact Tony Carlotto. A second edition is now in the planning stage, but input is needed. C4 will return to Boston 11/5-11/7/99 (starting with an 8PM cocktail party on 11/4). Ask for the Bay States Coin Show rate at the Radisson (617-482-1800). Once again, M&G will run the 1999 C4 auction. A nice core consignment of

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200+ "Redbook-type" coins has been received, plus a high grade New Jersey consignment and other nice coppers.

Educational presentations are being coordinated by Jim Rosen. Buell Ish is putting together a multi-collector exhibit of New Jersey coppers featuring condition, rarity and/or pedigree. Other exhibitors should contact me.

With the robbery Tom Reynolds' coins and a missing lot from our last C4 auction, I intend to "tighten up" our lot viewing procedures. *I need much more help behind the tables to make this happen. Please contact me (at [REDACTED]) if you can volunteer for C4. This is your convention and auction.*



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C4 Items for Sale

C4 Convention Items for Sale

Hardbound Scott Barnes Catalogs \$50

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Call or write Dennis if you are interested.

Add \$3 postage and handling. All will be sent uninsured at buyer's risk. If you want insurance, add an appropriate amount. Please forward your check to Dennis, payable to C4, at the address below.

The Richard Picker Collection Lot Envelopes

Stack's has provided C4 with Picker's own customized envelopes from his collection sold in October 1984. They are available from the club for \$5 each if you can show adequate proof that you own the coin. This \$5 donation is for the club's treasury, thanks to Stack's. All unsold envelopes will be returned to Stack's. If you own any of these coins and would like to own the envelope, contact me at the address below.

Dennis Wierzba



C4 Convention and Education Program

Boston, MA 11/05/99-11/07/99

The fifth C4 Convention will be held again in Boston, November 5-7, 1999 in conjunction with the Bay states Coin Show. The hotel will again be the Radisson Hotel, 200 Stuart St., Boston 02116.

Be sure to call early for reservations at 617-482-1800, since it may fill up soon. The convention rate is \$115 for a single room and \$125 for a double room. Please make sure to mention the Bay States Coin Show to get the discount.

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There will be an auction by McCawley and Grellman on 8 PM Saturday night. Consignments are still being sought for this auction. See ad in back of this issue for details.

Dealers please contact Ed Aleo for details at [REDACTED].

For those arriving early, there will be a Cocktail party on Thursday night at 8:00 PM. When you arrive at the hotel, check for the room number. Bourse floor hours for the public will be 10 AM- 5 PM on Friday, 10 AM- 7 PM on Saturday, and 10 AM- 4 PM on Sunday. Auction lot viewing will from 11 AM- 5 PM on Friday, and 10 AM- 7PM on Saturday. Volunteers will be needed for auction lot viewing. Please contact Dennis Wierzba to volunteer. Auction lot pickup will start Sunday at 10 AM.

There will be a C4 general membership meeting on Saturday at 9 AM.

Jim Rosen prepared the education program, and is as follows:

Friday Evening November 5, 1999

D. Wierzba, R. Williams	5:00-7:00	7 th New Jersey Symposium
John Adams	7:10-8:00	Betts Medals
Tom Denly	8:10-9:00	The Early Paper Money of America
Robert Vlack	9:10-10:00	French Colonial Coinage

Saturday November 6, 1999

Mary Sauvain	10:00-10:50	Collecting Colonials for the Beginner
Phil Mossman	11:00-11:50	Coinage that Circulated in Colonial America



Letters to the Editor

On the Washington Success Token and Punch linkage

I really enjoyed the last issue of the newsletter.

To bring you up-to-date on a few different thoughts, regarding the SUCCESS TO THE UNITED STATES, when I recently visited the Portsmouth Athenaeum (founded in 1817), I inquired as to their cabinet of coins. Early advertisements and news notices for the Athenaeum mentioned that they had a display. It turns out that the coins and tokens were traded away years ago, along with many antiques, artifacts, and curiosities, permitting the Athenaeum to concentrate on its manuscript archives and very extensive library.

However, I was shown a book of pencil rubbings of pieces that were in the cabinet as of circa 1830, very nicely done and well preserved. Most of the issues were probably given to the Athenaeum by seafarers, as Portsmouth at the time was one of America's leading maritime ports, with ships arriving and departing almost constantly for the West Indies (in particular) and other destinations. There was one United States item, and it was a large-size SUCCESS TO THE UNITED STATES token. The rubbing did not reveal the grade, of course, but it seemed to be quite sharp.

Separately, concerning this piece, W. Elliot Woodward ascribed the dies to Jacob Perkins of Newburyport. One of the great areas of opportunity in early numismatic research, in my opinion, is to carefully study the punches used on early tokens and medals and to develop what linkages may be suggested. While it is true that punches and dies often moved around from shop to shop, and certain artisans may have ordered punches from a common source, still a punch with an idiosyncrasy (such as rusting, a broken serif, etc.) may help determine the identity of the person who used it, and when. The subject is an interesting one, and I have been exploring it somewhat casually in the field of Civil War tokens. At first I thought to take measurements of the punches, but soon realized—although I had done this before—that the apparent size of a letter depends upon at

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least two other factors not related to the punch itself: the depth or shallowness in which the punch is impressed into the die, the deeper the punch, the larger the letter seems, and also the amount of wear that a particular specimen has received. A well-worn piece will often have letters appearing larger than a piece in Mint State, as the bases of the letters are larger than the top surfaces, and the eye, when viewing a high grade specimen tends to concentrate on the higher levels, giving an illusion of diminished size.

Sincerely,
Q. David Bowers



Walter Mould's Letter of February 20, 1784

In the summer, 1999 issue of the *C4 Newsletter*, I read with great interest Dennis Wierzba's report concerning an extant letter by Walter Mould. The letter, written on February 20, 1784 just after Mould had arrived in Ireland on his way to England, was to James Jarvis, future partner in the Connecticut "Company for Coining Coppers" and contract holder for the federal Fugio coinage. The letter indicates that Mould was traveling to England on Jarvis' behalf and that they were involved together in a possible business venture. Knowing that later they both became engaged in private coinage ventures for the newly established United States, it is likely that this early connection was also coinage related. The following year Mould applied for a federal coinage contract with Edward Brigden, but was denied, and in 1786 he was successful when New Jersey issued a coinage grant to himself, Albion Cox and Thomas Goadsby.

My primary interest in this letter is where Mould writes Jarvis "*I have had an offer by a gentleman from the West of England to fix in the Malting Business. I told him I could do nothing without your Consent but I really have a great Opinion of it and it may be carried on in that Place with the Other at a small expense.*" Unfortunately, the letter is intentionally vague which is understandable if Mould and

Jarvis were hoping to obtain a contract coinage business with one of the states.

I believe that Mould was referring to Samuel Atlee when he writes “*...a gentleman from the West of England...*” Samuel had emigrated from England to New York City in October 1783. While in England, Samuel had lived in Bristol and Walcot Parish, both in the western part of England where he had learned the brewer’s trade. Mould had also emigrated from England and was living in New York City at this same time.

Mould continues by writing “*...to fix in the Malting Business.*” After arriving in America, Samuel leased the Harrison Brewery that stood along the Eastern Shore of the Hudson River. It was a large and valuable brewery but had stood idle during the American Revolution and had been vandalized by both the American and British Armies. Thus, it would have taken Samuel a good deal of work to make the brewery operational again. His first ad appeared in the May 31, 1784 issue of the *New-York Packet* newspaper. Under the firm name of Samuel Atlee & Co., he advertised that he was now selling American porter produced at the brewery. At the time of this ad, his partner was William Alexander, also an English emigrant. Even though Walter Mould had “*...a great Opinion of it [the malting business]...*” he never became a partner with Samuel in the brewery business but had apparently discussed the possibility before returning to England at the request of James Jarvis in early 1784.

If Mould was referring to Samuel Atlee in his letter, as he appears to be, then his statement that the malting business “*...may be carried on in that Place with the Other at a small expense*” would denote the following: “*...that Place...*” would be Samuel’s brewery while “*...the Other...*” refers to the business that Jarvis and Mould were contemplating, such as a private coinage operation. His claim that the other business could be carried on “*...at a small expense*” also makes sense because the brewery was well suited for a coinage operation. It already had an excellent horse mill, with a sizable pair of iron rollers, that could have been used for rolling copper ingots into flat sheets from which planchets could be prepared.

Several pieces of circumstantial evidence indicate that the brewery was used as a mint after the brewery operation failed in early 1786. This letter adds to this evidence by showing a possible early connection between Samuel Atlee and Walter Mould. Numismatic evidence has already suggested that this connection existed. Certain letter punches with distinguishable characteristics have been attributed to Mould. These same punches were also employed to prepare the dies that were used to strike the Group 1 Atlee imitation British halfpence that I believe were produced at the brewery. Even though punch linkage evidence is not as conclusive as once thought, because it is now believed that duplicate punches were sometimes commercially available during this period, punch linkage can still be an important diagnostic when used in conjunction with other evidence.

For more information on Samuel Atlee and his brewery operation, refer to my paper that appeared in the October 1992 issue of the *Colonial Newsletter* (CNL No. 92). Also, for information on the Group 1 Atlee imitation British halfpence, see the March 1987 issue of the *Colonial Newsletter* (CNL No. 75).

Gary A. Trudgen



On New Jersey coppers and the Georgius Triumpho

As was so astutely pointed out by our Editor, colonial and large cent collectors share a common love of copper, however, the large cent collectors do seem to be so much more vociferous than we. In a much broader sense, as a group we are very much in our infancy, while the large cent collectors, through Penny Wise, have had much longer to develop. But this is perhaps an oversimplification.

Perhaps the biggest difference between these two interests is diversity. Within our realm of "colonials" there is seemingly infinite diversity and infinite combinations. To an extent, this is also true of large cents but certainly not to the same degree. By comparison

large cent collecting is limited by simpler methodology and fewer possibilities for specialization. Perhaps these more common interests among large cent collectors may have something to do with their greater diversity of opinions. Although this doesn't seem to be logical, it does seem to be true.

Oftentimes colonial collectors pick a specialty within our realm of infinite variety. Beyond this personally chosen specialty, we might also collect within other areas, as a secondary interest, or perhaps put together a "type" collection of other "colonials." We may know everything there is to know within our specialty but may be totally ignorant of other areas -we become expert in one area but are novices in another. This diversity and specialization is what keeps us separated as a collective. Given time, we may overcome this segregation.

Interestingly, as we are beginning to discover, many of these areas of specialization seem to overlap in one way or another. This overlapping was dutifully demonstrated by Dennis Wierzba in his discussion of a New Jersey copper with a Georgivs Triumpho as an undertype. I believe these interconnections are what will bring us together as a group. Mr. Wierzba should be congratulated for making this difficult identification on a specimen that is so obviously rough and porous.

Walter Breen did seem to have had a habit of making statements without presenting the source of supporting documentation or the basis for his claims. His statement that "several 'Plaited Mane' coppers" were known to him to have been overstruck on Georgivs Triumphos is one such example. Breen was also known to have had an encyclopedic memory, and there was a time that his word was as good as gold. Perhaps this statement was based on his much earlier unpublished 1955 manuscript on New Jersey Coppers - since this is not within my own area of specialized interest I can only guess that this may have simply been a case of faulty memory.

Breen's use of the word "several" would indicate that there were at least four such specimens with this Georgivs Triumpho undertype that were known to him. Michael Hodder is obviously aware of such

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documentation and that there were, in fact, four such specimens. It would seem that Hodder may have examined these same four specimens and had concluded that they each had a completely different undertype, from the other three, and that none of them had a Georgivs Triumpho as an undertype. Not unlike Breen, Hodder had also failed to establish a basis for his counter-statements, or this was just not presented within the context of Wierzba's discussion, leaving this part of the discussion incomplete. We, the reader, are left with: Breen said; Hodder says... Perhaps this part of the discussion could be continued?

I do feel that I am reasonably adept at attributing New Jersey coppers but when it comes to undertypes my confidence begins to waver. Identifying the undertype as to specific variety can often times be impossibility, even for the experts. This newly discovered Georgivs Triumpho does, however, overlap into my own specialty - counterfeit English halfpence. These connections were duly noted by Dennis Wierzba in his discussion. Since these interconnections between the Nova Constellatio, Georgivs Triumpho and counterfeit English halfpence are known to me, it comes as no great surprise to me that a Georgivs Triumpho was used as an undertype for a New Jersey copper.

At this point in time I don't believe that I could add anything substantial to Wierzba's discussion of this specimen other than that I am in agreement with Eric Newman and Mike Ringo on this matter. I therefore would have to disagree with Michael Hodder that the Georgivs Triumpho is some sort of transatlantic mule. The Georgivs Triumpho is a British product.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,
Byron K. Weston

Editor's Note: In reference to Byron's statements in his fifth and sixth paragraphs, Dennis' article is very much strengthened by the illustration of the coin. This is the only way to avoid the "X says, Y

disagrees". The illustration is there for everyone to assess. If any reader is aware of a similar NJ copper with a Georgius Triumpho as an undertype and can provide a photo, it would be very welcome.



The Horse Head Left Varieties-Why Left?

By John Lorenzo

Introduction

Sometimes when a numismatist looks at a coin and wonders about its origin, the answer may not be very complex. The question that has been asked from time to time is "Why on the New Jersey Coppers of Maris 49-f, Maris 50-f and Maris 51g are the horse heads facing left?" In 1992 during the cataloging of the Henry Garrett collection of New Jersey Michael Hodder has attributed Maris 49-f and Maris 50-f to the Rahway mint, and indicated these planchets were struck on Morristown *flans* or a planchet cut by a Morristown cutter. He attributed the Maris 51-g solely to the Rahway mint. The observance of dentilations on the Maris 49-f and Maris 50-f varieties seems to be the major basis for this conclusion along with the planchet size (i.e., an oversized planchet struck with undersized obverse and reverse dies). In the 1995 Griffee (First C4 Convention) auction catalogue, under the Maris 50-f lot description the reasoning of the universal Rahway mint is explained. Goadsby, acting alone after Albion Cox was locked out of Rahway, would more than likely import Morristown planchets to Rahway rather than move equipment and blank planchets to Morristown in the dead of winter during the November, 1787 to January, 1788 period. This lot description of Maris 50-f in the Griffee sale ends with the statement "that the true reason for the sudden type change from Head Right to Head Left signifies something important". This short paper will offer a possible explanation for this change.

To try to understand the possibility that the horse head left varieties are simply copying the horse portrait on the Great Seal of the State

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of New Jersey (Seal), a total background of the adoption of the Seal with a pictorial presentation is in order.

Background

As battles between British and Continental armies raged across the northern half of New Jersey in 1777, the legislature abandoned Trenton and fled south to the safer haven in the village of Haddonfield. There they reconvened in the second floor assembly room of the Indian King Tavern and continued to conduct the newly independent state's legal affairs and war efforts.

The Seal adopted during those sessions used Old World heraldic symbolism to mark the most important attributes and qualities of the state and its people and was designed by Pierre Eugene du Simitiere. These symbols involved the following areas: Agriculture, Abundance, Liberty, Sovereignty, Strength, and Hope. The central visual element of the design is a shield with three plows as a representation of the critical importance of agriculture to every aspect of daily life and government. The states economic power, as well as its military significance was based on the fact that it was the breadbasket of the Mid-Atlantic region. Even as delegates discussed this Seal at the Indian King Tavern, Continental and British soldiers elsewhere in the State were engaged in skirmishes aimed at securing exclusive access to New Jersey's farm stores and livestock herds as a source of army provisions. The female figure on the right of the Seal is Ceres, the roman goddess of rain. She holds a cornucopia representing the extraordinarily fertile soils and natural abundance of the state's fields, forests and waters. The female figure on the left is Liberty, holding a staff topped with the same kind of "Liberty Cap" worn as a symbol of rebellion by patriots throughout the colonies. Sitting atop the shield between both females is the helmet of a knight's suit of armor, a traditional old world symbol of state sovereignty that is also said to be a symbol of the importance of human intelligence and honor to the affairs of state. Framed in plumes above the helmet is a horse head facing left marking the fact that New Jersey was a major center for breeding of horses. The equestrian head also symbolizes the attributes of strength, speed and utility in war or commerce. And

finally the Seal portrays Hope for the Future. And below it all, in a banner anchored at its center with the year of independence, is the new state's motto "Liberty and Prosperity", the two post-war goals of all those in the Indian King Tavern that day who signed the seal into law. This act, together with other legislation, officially changed the status of New Jersey from that of a colony to that of a sovereign state in an independent nation.

These points of the Seal are pictured in Figure 1. The horse, symbol of Strength on the Seal, is indeed facing "left" and is very similar in design to the horse head seen on the three head left New Jersey copper varieties.

Why a Head Left Design Change

A recent review of a colonial newspaper the "Massachusetts Centinel" issued on September 5, 1787 contains an article titled "Coppers". Below is the transcription of the full content of this short but very informative article.

"COPPERS-The universal perplexity that pervades the community respecting the copper coin, at present in circulation, calls for attention from some quarter or other. Were people ascertained as to the final fate of this money they could take their measure accordingly-but while the matter hangs in suspence(sic), the simple, honest and unwary are made extremely unhappy, and often become the prey of sharpers. -From the foregoing the publick(sic) are entitled to a just solution of the final enquiries(sic): 1st -When a new coinage may be expected; 2nd -Whether the coppers, so called, now in circulation, that are not made of base metal, are to be called in as coin, or as old copper; 3rd -If the contract for coinage is a private one, and the contractor is not obliged to receive the old coppers as coin, who are to indemnify the unfortunate holders of the coppers in circulation."

In short, this article, as many others concerning copper coins during this time, is reflecting how unpopular these coppers were becoming.



Fig. 1: New Jersey State Seal as it appears in "The State Coinage Of New Jersey" by Bruce Kesse, Glen Rock, NJ 1988

C O P P E R S.

(14) The universal perplexity that pervades the community respecting the copper coin, at present in circulation, calls for attention from some quarter or other. Were people ascertained as to the final fate of this money, they could take their measures accordingly—but while the matter remains in suspense, the simple, honest and upright are made extremely unhappy, and often become the prey of sharpers.—From the foregoing, the publick are entitled to a just solution of the following inquiries.

- 1d. When a new coinage may be expected.
- 2d. Whether the coppers, so called, now in circulation, that are not made of base metal, are to be called in as coin, or as old copper.
- 3d. If the contract for coinage is a private one, and the contractor is not obliged to receive the old coppers as coin, who are to indemnify the unfortunate holders of the coppers in circulation.

(15) On Monday last the Ancient and Honourable Artillery of this Commonwealth, made their first autumnal parade on the Common, under the command of the Hon. Major-General BROOKS, their Captain.—The exercise, evolutions and fir-

Fig. 2: Article on “Coppers” in “The Massachusetts Centinel” of September 5th, 1787.

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This was one of the reasons why a single national mint was subsequently started in Philadelphia in 1792.

The idea on these three horse head left Maris varieties may have been simply to popularize further these horse head left coppers. And what better way to do this than to place the horse, the most important symbol on the coin, in the same orientation as in the Seal.

Conclusion

To popularize these unfavorable coppers the designers I believe decided to more closely copy the State Seal. But poor management, small profit margins, non-uniformity and other factors like excessive counterfeiting doomed these state coppers to failure just like the other circulating coppers of the time. Time may reveal a colonial document to connect the Seal with these three varieties.

Editor's Note: It seems clear to me that the horse head and plow images came from the State Seal. The above explanation is sensible. The question that bears asking is why only three Horse head left varieties and so many Horse head right ones?



Emission Sequences for Vermont Coppers

by Dennis P. Wierzba

Vermont Copper Coinage by Kenneth E. Bressett (1) is a tightly written article jammed packed with information that is often missed on the first (or subsequent) readings. I have extracted the emission sequence of Vermont coppers from this article to challenge students of hobby for their corrections or additions.

The die emission sequences are by Bressett number. Within each die number I will identify the varieties with Richardson-Ryder (RR) numbers, with the Bressett numbers for obverse/reverse combination in parentheses. I have abbreviated counterfeit Irish 1/2 d as IR, Nova

Constellatio as NC, and counterfeit British 1/2d as BR. Overstrike information is excerpted primarily from Philip Mossman, p.269 (2).

- 9 11(9-H); 15(9-I, c/s unique BR, unique RR4); 11(9-H)
- 10 34(10-J); 14(10-K, some o/s NC); 20(10-L); 37(10-M); 38 (10-N); 23(10-O); 36(10-P); 22(10-Q); 21(10-R)
- 16 26(16-T); 25(16-U); 25(16-U c/s 81 or 82 IR); 24(16-S); 25(16-U, shattered U die)
- 21 33(21-Y, usually o/s IR); 28(21-U, usually o/s 81 or 82 IR)
- E 7(5-E); 8(6-E)
- K 14(10-K, some o/s NC); 12(11-K, usually o/s 85 NC 5-E); 32(12-K, all o/s NC)
- L 19(13-L); 20(10-L)
- S 17(14-S); 16(15-S); 24(16-S); 30(23-S)
- X 18(19-X, o/s usually 81-82 IR, unique o/s 76 IR); 35(20-X, all c/s 81 or 82 IR)
- U 25(16-U); 28(21-U, usually o/s 81 or 82 IR); 29(22-U, o/s 81 or 82 IR); 25(16-U, o/s 81 or 82 IR); 31(24-U); 39(25-U); 25(16-U, shattered U die); 29(22-U, shattered U die)

The die states implicit in the above die emission sequences are described in the Bressett article and will not be repeated here

One unusual feature of Vermont overstrikes (shared with some Connecticuts) are one or two distinct undertype varieties such as Nova Constellatios (5-E) or Irish counterfeits (1781 or 1782). This strongly implies that the undertypes were purchased by the keg as struck. Kegs of such “hardware” were certainly shipped in this manner from England. How many of the domestic produced coppers

were shipped this way (versus by the bag or bucket fill) is unknown. This observation would be supportive of an English source for the Novas and Irish counterfeits, but, of course, does not absolutely rule out a domestic source.

Nice planchet stock for RR16, RR20 and RR24 may indicate that they were struck at the same time and place. Likewise, RR 18, 25, 28, 29, 33, and 35 have Irish undertypes using Bressett dies 16,19, 20, 21 22, U, X and Y perhaps indicating being minted in the same place. Nova Constellatios are under RR 12, 14 and 32 using dies 10, 11, 12 and K again suggesting a common mint location.

On an unrelated note, if a new reverse die were found, I would strongly suggest using AA as a designation. Dr. Maris continued his series after Z using "a" which is visually, but not verbally different from "A".

(1) *The Vermont Copper Coinage* by Kenneth Bressett, in Studies on Money in Early America, ANS, NY, NY 1976, p.173-198.

(2) *Money of the American Colonies and Confederation* by Phillip Mossman, ANS Numismatic Studies 1993.



Butternut Bites #4: Coins and Home Security

(This is the first of three articles regarding security of coin collections.)

by Steve Ellsworth

"DEALER ROBBED" **"COLLECTOR BURGLARIZED"** These are headlines that appear almost weekly in the major numismatic publications. It has been previously said that one out of three collections will eventually be stolen. Many are never reported. The impact is not only financial, but emotional as well. A sense of violation occurs that is difficult to describe. The loss has a negative

impact to the victim in particular and to our hobby in general. Simply put, it's bad for business.

The age-old adage “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” could never be truer than with coin security. The easiest way to prevent crime is to avoid it, by not giving criminals the opportunity to perpetrate their crimes against you.

In hopes of keeping the “joys of collecting” enjoyable and the dreams alive, these guidelines should help reduce the risks of theft to collectors and dealers. After studying hundreds of thefts, it is my belief that nearly always, one or more of these guidelines have been ignored. Security risks can never be eliminated, but they can be managed to a tolerable level. Security is a constant. Vigilance must always be maintained. Be alert and aware of your surroundings. Criminals avoid vigilant persons.

Some of these suggestions you may already know about and practice. Some may be new that you could put into practice. Few people can do all that I suggest, but the more suggestions you implement, the lower your risk of being a target and eventually a victim. Hopefully, my recommendations and suggestions will be useful and helpful to most collectors and dealers.., if they continually practice and use them.

Most security can be developed and divided into four parts: ***operational, perimeter, external and internal security.***

Operational security is how you operate or refers to as “your mode of operation.” You need to ask yourself, “What kind of target am I?”

Perimeter security is considered in the immediate area near the target. . .your coins and collection. As an example, in home security your property line to your home would be the perimeter

External security is considered the outside shell or walls of your home or car. Internal security is inside your car, home or anywhere

you can physically touch your coins. Your objective should be to by to think of ways you can protect and improve an each of these four areas.

Operational

Sanitize your home address by using a post office box on all coin publications and mailings. If you are a professional collector or dealer, your home address should be removed from the phone book, listing only your name and town. Don't forget about your stationery, envelopes, business cards, and checks. I recently gave a personal check with my street address to another dealer, who unfortunately suffered a theft, which included my check. Will the thief assume that the address on my check is another potential target? Also, insure that your trash does not give away that you are a dealer of collector of rare coins.

Insurance is an excellent idea for both collectors and dealers. The normal costs are approximately 1% a year. For professional collectors and dealers, this cost is a deductible expense. Most policies have a number of restrictions and exceptions including coins left in unattended vehicles. Some homeowners' policies will cover a small coin theft, but many have exclusion clauses. Read your insurance policy carefully.

Perimeter

If you live in a rural area or a location that lends itself to a fence, install one. Even a simple split rail, three plank or a low three-foot picket fence will make most thieves uncomfortable entering. Add a gate on the walk or driveway and you double the level of mental stress for a thief.

A dog can be a wonderful companion and a loving family pet. To a thief they are their worst nightmare. Unknown intruders that intend to do harm, most dogs identify. They have a keen sense that most humans have not developed. What kind of dog is best? Buy a couple of dog books, read and determine what is best for you and

your family. My thoughts are the bigger the better. My personal favorite is the English Mastiff. They are very sweet and loving dogs and rated number one with children. They are nicknamed the ‘gentle giants,’ since they weigh over 200 pounds. However, with a mouth that can rival a grizzly, a provoked Mastiff can snap a person’s leg in half. Add a second dog to the equation, and you have compounded the thief’s problem. Noise is not conducive to a successful burglar. Even a small barking dog hinders a perpetrator. Most female dogs tend to be slightly more protective, and slightly more intelligent than males.

A few well-placed external lights should be on at night or have motion sensors that will turn them on. Thieves do not enjoy working at night in lighted areas. However, most home burglaries occur on weekday mornings between 9:30 and 11:30, not by professionals, but by amateurs who may be skipping school, either to support a drug habit or simply for thrills.

External

If you do not have an alarm system, get one! I would not own a tool shed without an alarm. It is sad but true that most alarm systems are installed after a burglary. I would recommend that you use a company that is well known in your community for a couple of reasons. First, service. It is important to have rapid service and repair. Second, name recognition. The alarm signs themselves are a deterrent. The signs and stickers should be at the property’s entrance, as well as on ground level windows and doors. Simulated stickers or signs are of little use. Thieves know the real alarm signs from the phonies. There are several nationally known companies, but ADT & Brinks are the most widely used. An alarm system should not be kept a secret.

If possible, a silent central alarm system is best. At a minimum it should cover all doors and have at least one internal motion or pressure sensor. Thieves almost always roam the house in search of your special hiding places, and given enough time, will usually find them. A couple of motion sensors or internal door or mate sensors

will do the trick. The alarm cables need to be buried and protected by metal conduit. A back-up battery system with at least a 12-hour cell will enable your system to work in power outages. Whether you work out of your home, office or have a coin shop, I recommend a silent panic button. They are a low cast, when installed in conjunction with the alarm system you have chosen. Don't forget to include smoke and fire alarms in your system as well. The added cost is minimal, and your additional objective is to try to protect life, as well as property.

Door locks should be double-keyed, double-sided dead bolts. Internal latch dead bolts are not as secure, since a thief can break a hole in the glass or door, reach through and turn the knob to gain entry. Regardless of how the thief gains entry into your home, the double-keyed dead bolt will prevent a quick exit for the burglar to carry your stolen property. In most home burglaries the bed linen is usually taken. The purpose is not so the thief can get a good night's sleep, but rather the bed itself is the collection point with each layer of bedding acting as a ready made satchel. A normal two-bedroom home will provide a minimum of ten satchels for your property. If the thief's entry point is through a small window, exiting with large amounts of your property is hindered. Your objective should be to make the entry and exit very time consuming. A determined thief will gain entry, the question is how long will it take, and how long for them to escape. Security chain locks are unreliable as they can be pulled out of most doors or door jams with a slight jar. Steel doors and frames offer better protection. On any new moves, have the locks changed. Even if you haven't moved, change your locks every five years. Get into the habit of keeping your doors locked, even when home or working in the yard. Also, keep your garage door down and locked. Most garages will have some valuable tools that may be of help to the burglar.

Never let a stranger into your home. In an emergency, you should make the phone call for help, on behalf of the stranger. If strangers say they are from an authorized service, phone to insure that the service call is authorized. Service people expect this and are not offended by it. And never tell a stranger you are home alone.

Internal

A beautiful display of rare coins and currency has no place in a home or office. An alternative is photos of your prized or valuable coins. Most likely a photo album would be something that a burglar would not want. They could also be used, should your collection be stolen, in recovery and identification purposes. One of the coin-grading services offers a unique photo service for collectors considering this option.

The best idea is to display your coins at a local coin show as an exhibit. This way many people can share in your collection who would not only understand its value, but would appreciate your numismatic efforts. Not only is it fun, but you may get ideas to improve your display to enable you to exhibit at a larger regional or a national show in competition. This seems to me to make more sense than keeping your coins at home and risking a burglary, or hidden in a bank vault for time and eternity, never to be seen or shared with anyone.

Use an answering machine that is silent or on which the volume can be turned very low when answering calls. Some burglars carry cell phones and simply dial your number and listen at your door or window to see if they can hear an answering machine. A continuous ringing phone is a signal that it is clear to enter. I prefer a phone network answering service, with no machine at all. When you are away for any extended length of time, set your machine or service to "no ring" or immediate pickup. Be sensitive to your phone message; one that announces that you are away on vacation for two weeks will not do. If you are away, don't forget to have your mail and newspaper stopped. A stack of mail or newspapers also announces your absence. In the summer, have your lawn cut when you are away and let your neighbors and local police know that you will be away.

Two or three lights that turn on at different time settings would be another good idea. A slightly loud radio or stereo left on could also help give the illusion that the premises are occupied.

Fall, 1999

Use a bank safety deposit box for the majority of your coins. Don't make the mistake of filling it with common date proof and mint sets and low-grade inexpensive coins. Today most tennis shoes are worth more money than all but a couple of proof or mint sets. Unless you lock your shoes in a safe deposit box, use the safe deposit box for only your more expensive coins. A word of caution is that most banks do not insure against both burglary and fire. For large collections, I would recommend multiple boxes in multiple locations.

If you decide to use a safe, a small home safe would probably do for the coins you are currently studying. The safe needs to have a burglar entry time of at least 15 minutes (TL-15) and have a minimum Class C fire rating. A safe with a TL-30 is even better. Older safes use older technology. Don't forget to bolt it to the floor from the inside if the safe could be carried or dragged from your home. Larger cabinet safes, weighing 300 lb. or more, will provide more security. Your alarm can also be connected to your safe with numerous specialized electronic security features. Be sure to place it on a solid cement floor, in a semi-hidden place.

If you have already made purchased a small cheap safe, your money has not been wasted. Place it in the master bedroom, filled with some cheap costume jewelry and a few inexpensive coins along with a perhaps \$100 in cash. Tape a paper with the combination to the outside. Should a burglar gain access, they may be content with the "dumb" owners and not vandalize your home in their frustration of trying to open the hidden, more secure safe.

A word of caution about your decision regarding safes. Will a safe that prevents a common burglar access, invite them to return as an armed robber? Large or valuable collections stored at home could be inviting to an armed robber. When a bandit is holding a gun on you or a family member, even the most secure safe should be opened immediately. There have been only a few home armed robberies for coins. And in those robberies, I only know of a few that resulted in a murder. The overall number of robberies is only a fraction of the number of burglaries that occur each year. Unfortunately, organized crime groups are now routinely targeting many known jewelry and

coin dealers. According to a recent Washington Post article, robberies of traveling dealers in Los Angeles have become epidemic.

Editor's Note: Steve Ellsworth is a retired Army Colonel who served with the Army's Special Forces. He has had specialized training in anti-terrorist, physical, intelligence, and personal protective security. He has also sent to us some tips on firearm security which can be provided to any interested reader on request.



St. Patrick's Coinage Projects

By John Griffey

There are two projects underway regarding St. Patrick's coinage.

- 1- Stan Stephens (address in front of newsletter under club officers) is preparing a reference listing of all known coins in the hands of US collectors.
- 2- I am working on a book on these coins. It will cover more than you ever wanted to know about St. Patrick's coinage, including early history, facts about Marc Newby, enlargements of all known die varieties (at least 200 or more), and an attribution and rarity guide.

Well-known photographer and copper expert, Bill Noyes, is the official photographer for both of the above projects.

Please help us with these two projects. Let me know if you have any of these coins, even if your collection contains only one of these coins. Stan and I will see how we can have your coin(s) photographed. Bill attends the C4, EAC, and FUN conventions, plus a limited number of additional shows on both the East and West coasts.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

John M. Griffee



Unclassified Ads

Ed Sarafian



Wanted to buy, Machins Mills Coppers!

Varieties: Vlack 4-71C, 9-76B small date, 13-87CT in any grade.
Please call, write, or ship with price desired.



Bob Merchant,

E-mail: vermont@ix.netcom.com

WANTED: "E.B. COUNTERMARKED COIN. I would like to acquire an example of one of the foreign gold coins that were contermarked by Ephraim Brasher of New York. Please contact me if you know where I may be able to locate an example for my research collection. All correspondence will be immediately replied to. Thank you.



WANTING TO PURCHASE: Low grade colonial coinage, colonial duplicates and currency, pin notes, sewn together pieces or other era related paper items of interest. Please write me with information on your items for sale. Thank you.

Send to: Walter Deleu- C4



Desperately Wanted:

Choice Mint State Red Book Type Colonials! Getz Silver & Copper Washington Pieces, Silver Myddelton Tokens (with/without box), Gem Mint state Pillar dollars, Rarity-7 and Rarity-8 Connecticut's. Also: all early (pre 1835) US gold- especially rare dates and die varieties.

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"VARIETY CHECKLIST AND RARITY RATINGS FOR AMERICAN COLONIAL ISSUES AND STATE COINAGES" 23 pages covering those issues most commonly collected by variety; loose-leaf format for convenience.

Fall, 1999

Revised quantities for rarity 1,2 and 3. Corrections to the rarity ratings (yes, there will be some) will be announced in the C4 Newsletter over the years. This is a long term, evolving project.

Price: \$15.00, which includes postage. Available from:

Tom Madigan



Wanted: Back copies of the C4 Newsletter. Also wanted are back issues of Coin World, Numismatic News, and any other periodical covering US numismatics.

Contact: Harold Thomas



I desire to correspond with anyone who has an interest in the tokens, medals, dies, craftsmanship, biographies, and other aspects of Boston engraver Joseph H. Merriam and Springfield engraver James A. Bolen. Also, I would like to purchase and would pay full retail price for any Bolen colonial copies of different metals and mulings that I do not presently have. Correspondence is invited.

David Bowers



WANTED TO BUY: Talbot, Allum and Lee 1794 cent, No New York in EF or better condition.

Harrell H. Cherry



Barry Tayman and I, under a grant from the ANS, are working on a monograph on Canadian Blacksmith tokens. We are seeking information from collectors, especially about the rarer pieces. I can be contacted at my home address or through my web site.

George Fuld, Sc.D.

Fuld1@home.com



Imitation halfpence coppers (Redbook group I, II and III) in VF to EF condition. All dates wanted.

Please call Min at [REDACTED] or E-mail at Unifilis @aol.com



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